CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Project Proposal: Amendments to the City of Seattle Land Use Code, Title 23, related to land use and zoning, amending Section 23.50.12 (Table A, permitted and prohibited uses) of the Seattle Municipal Code, to allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in certain zones in the Ballard/Interbay Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center (BINMIC)

Project Sponsor: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

Location of Proposal: The proposal is a non-project action, applicable in General Industrial 1 (IG1) and General Industrial 2 (IG2) zoned land within the Ballard/Interbay Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center (BINMIC).

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposal is a non-project action, applicable in General Industrial 1 (IG1) and General Industrial 2 (IG2) zoned land within the Ballard/Interbay Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center (BINMIC), that would allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in new and existing buildings.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - Environmental Determination - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

SEPA DETERMINATION [ ] Exempt [X] DNS [ ] MDNS [ ] EIS

[ ] DNS with conditions

[ ] DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND

Proposal Description

The proposal would amend SMC Section 23.50.12 (Table A) to allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in IG1 and IG2 zones in the

BINMIC. Currently, colleges and universities (including major institutions) are permitted uses only in buildings that have existed since October 5, 1987. The proposed text amendment would allow such uses in new or existing buildings.

The Shoreline Master Program (SMP) applies in IG1 and IG2 zones in the BINMIC. All of the land zoned IG1 or IG2 is located within Urban Industrial (UI) or Urban Maritime (UM) shoreline environments. Water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities, as well as water-dependent or water-related colleges, institutes for advanced study, and vocational schools are permitted outright on waterfront lots in both the UI and UM shoreline environments, as either principal or accessory uses (SMC 23.60.840 and SMC 23.60.720).

Public Comment

Proposed changes to the Land Use Code require City Council approval. Public comment will be taken on the proposed text changes during future Council hearings.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

This proposal is an adoption of legislation and is defined as a non-project action. The disclosure of the potential impacts from this proposal was made in an environmental checklist submitted by the proponent, dated May 9, 2012. The information in the checklist, a copy of the proposed text changes, the Director's Report and Recommendation, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar legislative actions form the basis for this analysis and decision.

This is a substantive change to the Land Use Code to allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in new and existing buildings in certain zones in the BINMIC. This amendment may result in potential impacts and warrants further discussion.

ELEMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Adoption of the proposed Land Use Code amendments would result in no immediate adverse short-term impacts because the adoption would be a non-project action. The discussion below evaluates the potential long-term impacts that might conceivably result from differences in future development patterns due to the proposed amendments.

Natural Environment

Earth, Air, Water, Plants and Animals, Energy, Natural Resources, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Noise, Releases of Toxic or Hazardous Materials

The proposed changes would result in no direct impacts, and are unlikely to result in significant indirect or cumulative adverse impacts related to earth, air, water, plants/animals, fisheries, energy, natural resources, sensitive areas, noise, or releases of toxic/hazardous substances. The proposed amendment is a non-project action that would allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in IG1 and IG2 zones in the

BINMIC. Such uses already are permitted in these zones in buildings existing since October 5, 1987, and are allowed in the relevant zones in the Shoreline Master Program. Given the specialized nature of this use, this text amendment is unlikely to result in noticeably more such uses in BINMIC than are allowed under the existing code; rather, it is expected to provide flexibility in siting such uses. Development of specific projects on individual sites is subject to the City's existing regulations, such as the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Ordinance, the Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and Noise Ordinance, and will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

Built Environment

Land & Shoreline Use, Height/Bulk/Scale

The proposal is not likely to cause a shift in development or land use patterns in a given area given the small number of projects that are expected to apply for permits under these provisions, so any impacts to land and shoreline use are expected to be minimal. The amendment does not propose any changes to existing development standards in IG1 or IG2 zones, and is not expected to alter the height, bulk, or scale of a proposed development. Development of specific projects on individual sites is subject to the City's existing regulations and will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

Transportation, Public Services and Utilities

Given the small number of projects that are expected to apply for permits under these provisions, the proposed Code amendments are expected to result in minimal direct impacts and are unlikely to result in indirect or cumulative significant adverse impacts related to transportation or public services/utilities. Development of specific projects on individual sites is subject to the City's existing regulations and will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

Conclusion

The proposed code amendments would allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in IG1 and IG2 zones in the BINMIC. Currently, such uses are allowed in buildings that have existed since October 5, 1987. The legislation is expected to provide greater flexibility for siting water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities, but is not expected to increase the total demand for such facilities. Additionally, the total number of such specialized facilities locating in the BINMIC is likely to be small. For these reasons, the proposed code amendments are expected to have minimal impacts on both the natural and the built environment.

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist, code amendment, and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

[X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c).

[ ] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c).

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS - SEPA

None.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: May 17, 2012
John G. Shaw, Senior Transportation Planner
Department of Planning and Development